Lessons in the Desert

I love a good discussion of scripture, and have difficulty understanding those who avoid conflicting opinions with others. Discussing doctrine is something that was always done in the temple, Christ did it as a child as did many apostles. I believe that defending our beliefs are a crucial part of contending for the faith. I think perhaps many Christians believe that the faith will not stand up to close scrutiny.

> **Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.**
> **Proverbs 27:17 (KJV)**

Something that has always bewildered me is how someone so seemingly intelligent can completely miss the most basic of truths. I was reminded of this yesterday while contemplating Satan's temptation of Christ in the desert found in Matthew 4. There are several truths I have gleaned from this encounter that I would like to share.

The Importance of Scripture

> **And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.**
> **Matthew 4:6-7 (KJV)**

There are false teachers out there such as Jan Boshoff (AKA Finalcall01) who claim that the Bible is not the Word of God, only Christ. Yet this dialogue between Satan and Christ is largely composed of scripture! Yes, Christ is the Word made flesh, but that in no way diminishes either the importance or authority of scripture. Every time Christ did something it was for a reason, there is no filler in the Bible. This exchange between Satan and Christ demonstrates the vital importance of both knowing and putting scripture to good use in our spiritual battles.

Why Men Are Blinded to the Truth

> **Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.**
> **Ezekiel 28:12 (KJV)**

The next thing I learned came from asking questions based on this dialogue that Satan and Christ had in the desert, from trying to comprehend Satan's motivation here. Did Satan actually believe that he had a chance at successfully tempting Christ, and if so why? Me, the insignificant speck that I am cannot begin to challenge the wisdom of God. What caused Satan, this being full of wisdom to think for a moment that he could? This perplexed me for a while until the Lord directed me to this verse.

> **Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.**
> **Ezekiel 28:17 (KJV)**

It was the sin that became his downfall, pride! How interesting it is to me that it was Satan's own brightness that blinded him! Pride blinds us to the truth like the bright light of a camera flash. That brings celebrity into an interesting perspective, doesn't it? When gone unchecked pride renders any wisdom we may have useless.

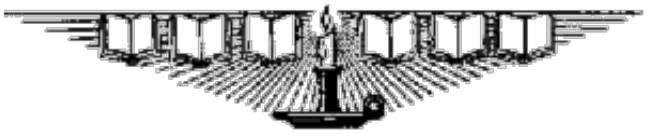
> **For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.**
> **Romans 12:3 (KJV)**

Satan Knows Scripture

> **For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**
> **Hebrews 5:12-14 (KJV)**

Satan quoted **Psalm 91:11-12** to Christ in a feeble attempt to trick Him. Jesus replied with **Deuteronomy 6:16**. We have the same thing going on today, false teachers with their doctrines of devils misquoting scripture! We must actively study scripture and become skilled in the "word of righteousness". Satan knows scripture, and if he dared to challenge Christ Himself using it will he not do the same to us? He will twist scripture in order to deceive us, we must not allow pride to blind us to this fact. We must allow the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. We must learn our doctrine from God's Word, not men and their theories or denominations. We must not allow ourselves to remain ignorant of Satan's tactics (**2 Corinthians 2:11**). We must not blindly accept any doctrine, even scripture, unless we are sure that we have first 'rightly divided the word' (**2 Timothy 2:15**) as Christ did in this situation.

Going Through the Desert

> **Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, God left him, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.**
> **2 Chronicles 32:31 (KJV)**

Last but not least, this is something that we must learn to accept, that God allows His people to go through dry periods for a time. He does so both to try our faith and that we may understand we cannot do anything of our own strength. God may seem to leave us for a time of testing, but He will never forsake us. He will in fact come to our rescue lest we dash our foot against a stone.